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ABSTRACT

This paper presents selected findings from a nationwide study of 1,493 humanities faculty teaching in a carefully drawn sample of 156 two-year colleges. Among the findings reported in this paper were: (1) 40% of the faculty had been neither instructors nor administrators in secondary schools before coming to the two-year college; (2) 90% of the faculty held the master's degree; (3) the ratio of males to females was about two to one; (4) humanities faculty spent less time in the classroom than in previous years; (5) in terms of reference groups and role models, the instructors saw their colleagues as most useful while they saw high school teachers and college administrators as not very useful; (6) 86% of the faculty indicated they would like to take steps within the next five years for professional development, with obtaining the doctorate as the most popular mode of development; (7) given the present rate at which instructors are obtaining the doctorate, by 1980 it may be that as many as 22% of the humanities faculty will hold the doctorate; and (8) for a number of reasons, humanities faculty generally have weak ties with their disciplines. (JDS)

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HUMANITIES INSTRUCTORS IN TODAY'S TWO-YEAR COLLEGES

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Who are the humanities instructors in today's two-year colleges? Where do they come from? Where are they headed? How prevalent is the doctorate among this group? What about part-timers, chairpersons, minority group representation? What about their concerns for students, the humanities, the future?

These are some of the questions that were answered through a nationwide survey of 1,493 people teaching the humanities in 156 two-year colleges, all carefully selected in terms of locale, control, emphasis, size, and age. The study, conducted by the Center for the Study of Community Colleges and sponsored by the National Endowment for the Humanities, revealed demographic data, attitudes, and preferences, reference group identification, and measures of satisfaction and personal functioning. This morning I will present some of our more interesting findings.

Contrary to popular opinion, responses to our eleven-page Faculty Survey revealed that before coming to the two-year college, over 40% of the faculty had been neither instructors nor administrators in secondary schools. On the basis of their attitudes toward the high schools, most instructors seem to have broken with these institutions. Many see high school teachers as poor sources of advice on teaching.

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One third of these respondents had been involved in a four-year college or university beyond the level of teaching or research assistant, and the larger proportion had worked in their current institutions for five to ten years. One-third either had been or were currently acting as department or division chairpersons. About one-fourth of the faculty had themselves been students in community/junior colleges, and 15% had received the associate degree. Almost all hold the bachelor's degree, and a very high percentage (90%), the master's.

A much higher percentage of instructors have the doctorate now than even five years ago--14% as compared to 8 to 10% in studies done in the late 1960's. There appear to be two related reasons for this. One is that faculty growth has slowed down considerably. Heretofore, the number of faculty members who attained doctorates while they were on the job was balanced by the number of new people without higher degrees, thus maintaining a constant ratio. A second explanation for these results substantiates the notion that two-year college faculty members traditionally acquire a doctorate after several years on the job instead of entering the institution with that degree in hand. For example, 24% of our sample say they are currently working on their doctorate. If only one-fourth obtain that degree by 1980, the ratio of doctorates will increase to 20% of the full-time faculty. Add to that the likelihood that a greater number of new full-time staff members will have already earned doctorates before employment, and a 22% total figure by 1980 is not unrealistic. In short, we are forecasting a rapid upturn in the percentage of full-time faculty members with doctoral degrees.

Incidentally, one third of these respondents are over 50 years, whereas fewer than one-fourth of the total sample are in the older age groups. Nineteen percent hold their highest degree in Education, suggesting that the person with a master's in a teaching discipline picks up a doctorate in Education while working.

As for affirmative action, in most two-year colleges, this mandate is taking hold very slowly. We found a ratio of two to one males over females among our sample of institutions, a constant with the same ratio reported in earlier studies. Very few ethnic minorities teach Humanities: 2.6% Blacks, 1.9% Chicanos, less than 1% Orientals. In new colleges--those opened since 1970-1975--a higher percentage of the faculty is female and/or younger than in the older institutions, but ethnic minorities are hardly represented. And the faculty themselves are strongly against preferential hiring at their own colleges for women and/or minorities (61% against to 24% for).

Another element considered in this study was information about part-timers, information that is notably absent in most studies of two-year college faculty. We particularly wanted to obtain material that would differentiate between full and part-time instructors. We found, for example, that part-timers are highly represented in religious studies, foreign languages, and art. This is probably because local ministers frequently teach religious studies; teachers from the local high schools often teach English as a Second Language; and artists who work at other pursuits may teach art history. Only two-thirds of the part-timers are

employed elsewhere, suggesting that many retired people teach one or two courses or that young people try to get into full-time teaching at the same time that they complete their graduate studies at a nearby university. The latter point is confirmed by the fact that nearly half the part-timers in our sample are aged 35 or younger. Part-timers differ from full-timers in that they are less experienced; have spent fewer years in their current institutions; read fewer scholarly and professional journals; are less likely to hold memberships in professional associations; are less concerned with curriculum and instruction and with the humanities; and are more likely to hold the university as a reference group. Colleges in the South tend to be heavily weighted toward full-time faculty members while the large Western institutions are heaviest in part-timers.

Other questions dealt with classroom time. Several studies have maintained that two-year college instructors spend significantly more time in the classroom than do their counterparts at four-year colleges and universities. For example, Two National Education Association reports that were disseminated seven years apart (1964 and 1971) show a mean centering at 17 hours. Although classroom time alone hardly accounts for the total faculty work load, our own results as of Spring, 1975 suggest that humanities instructors now spend somewhat less time in classroom instruction. Almost one-third reported 13-15 hours and only 13%, 15-18 hours.

Further, we wondered about staff development. What for instance, is the outlook for in-service training and faculty development? People who want further preparation apparently want it for different reasons. Some seem to feel that further preparation will make them better instructors--there was a high correlation between

the Curriculum and Instruction and Concern for Students constructs and the Preference for Further Preparation construct. However, a high correlation also exists between those who desire further preparation and those who see the university as a reference group to be emulated.

Reference groups and role models, in fact, relate to the way an individual conducts his personal and professional life. Therefore, we were interested in determining the models held by two-year college faculty. Questions were asked regarding eight designated reference groups as sources of advice on teaching: "Quite useful" was attributed to colleagues by 53%, to students by 43%, and to department chairpersons by 30%. Professional journals, university professors, and, again, students were seen by over 45% as somewhat useful, while over 45% saw high school teachers and college administrators as not very useful. Instructors who look to the university as their reference group were chiefly those who had not been teaching very long in the two-year college. They tended to think that people with doctoral degrees are more capable or knowledgeable, and they have a strong orientation toward their academic discipline.

Related to the concept of role models are the data we elicited about the types of positions that would appear attractive to the respondents five years hence. For example, would they like to be teaching in a four-year college or university? Twice as many respondents (40%) saw themselves in faculty positions at four-year colleges or universities as in positions at two-year colleges other than their own. However, nearly as many (38%) felt that they would prefer to be holding positions like the ones they held currently -- in other words, they are satisfied to be community/junior college instructors.

Regarding other future plans, almost all (86%) said that within the next five years they would like to take steps toward professional development. In order of popularity, these steps were to get a Ph.D. or Ed.D., enroll in courses in a university, enroll in in-service courses at their college, get a master's degree, and get a Doctor of Arts degree. If they had a free summer, traveling and taking classes/reading/studying were most appealing.

Because the emphases in two-year colleges are typically on teaching and students, we wanted to determine the concerns our respondents had for their students. We found that most humanities instructors have a definite sense of relatedness to their students. They rank the following qualities as very important for students to gain: first, self-knowledge and a sense of personal identity; thenknowledge of and interest in community and world problems, preparation for further formal education, knowledge and skills directly applicable to their careers, aesthetic awareness, and, finally an understanding and mastery of academic discipline. As humanities instructors, over one-third believe that students in occupational courses should take "six or more" humanities courses and almost one-fourth suggested four courses.

Indeed, the faculty's concern for students is closely related to their concern for the humanities as well as curriculum and instruction. Further, a high correlation was found between concern for students and degree of satisfaction. Faculty highly concerned for students were also interested in further preparation. In short, these constructs meshed to give a picture of well-functioning, involved two-year college instructors who differ from their counterparts at both the secondary school

and the university in various areas of concern.

As for other dimensions of personal functioning, respondents indicated that satisfaction is not related to the number of hours taught weekly. Nor is it related to full-time or part-time status. In fact, it seems to be generally unrelated to institutional conditions but to be more a personality trait that transcends the working environment. Perhaps this is not a surprise--happy people are happy people--but it does weaken the argument that faculty members would be more satisfied if they taught fewer hours or had better working conditions. Members of the satisfied group tend to be older, a finding that is confirmed by studies of satisfaction in other fields. The less satisfied group are young people who are working on doctorates and would would prefer teaching at a four-year institution.

Further, well-integrated people, those who are high in Functional Potential which is a measure of ego strength, were found to have been former students in two-year colleges, to be working on their doctorates, 41 years or older, full-time faculty members. Highly functioning individuals are also more related than people low in Functional Potential to (in order of degree) their friends, family, other instructors in their field, most instructors at their school, their students, teacher organizations, and college administrators.

Highly involved instructors-high in both Functional Potential and satisfaction- were those currently acting as chair persons of their department or division - 15% of the total population. These chairpersons are high in orientation to curriculum and instruction, show more concern for students than their non-chairperson colleagues, and tend away from the university as their reference group.

Additionally, they tend to differ from non-chairpersons in that fewer of them had been students in community-junior colleges while more had spent time in secondary schools as instructors or administrators and more would like to enroll in in-service courses at their colleges. Further, chairpersons had worked in their current institutions more years than non-chairpersons; are less inclined to be working at jobs in addition to their teaching; are more likely to subscribe to and read scholarly journals within their disciplines as well as professional education journals; and appear to be less interested than non-chairpersons in faculty positions at a four-year college or university, at another community or junior college, or at a school outside the U.S. They are more interested in administrative positions in a community or junior college or in their present activities than are non-chairpersons. Chairpersons are also more likely to be members of professional organizations, to attend regional or national meetings, and to present conference papers.

In summary, instructors participating in this nationwide study of two-year college humanities faculty seem to be aware of themselves as a separately functioning professional body. They see their own colleagues and students as the best sources of advice on teaching. They are not interested in administrative positions. They are interested in curriculum and instruction, in working on their courses, and on their teaching, almost to the exclusion of other professional pursuits. However, a cautionary note is needed: There is the danger that the faculty will create the high school image to which they no longer adhere. This seems plausible for several reasons: Many

two-year college instructors teach in two or more fields. This is understandable because few colleges have enrollments large enough to support a full-time instructor in anthropology, art history, or cultural geography. The teacher's schedule is filled out with other courses, which can serve to strain disciplinary affiliation to the breaking point. Further, their lack of orientation toward disciplinary research--reinforced by teaching loads and lack of reward for conducting research--weakens disciplinary ties. The instructor's localism, his lack of affiliation with national professional groups, his failure to read or write in the professional literature, and his adversary relationship with college administrators--all these mark a secondary school image.

At the same time, we would like to believe that as community college teaching develops along its present course, the faculty will be seen as genuine professional in instruction. Ideally, as this tendency grows, it will lead to full-time faculty members perceiving themselves as managers of student learning who evaluate themselves on their clients' progress. They can abandon the isolation of their classrooms and take up broader professional responsibilities. They can coordinate the work of the part-time faculty members whose numbers have increased so rapidly in recent years. They are becoming managers of para-professional and instructional aides, too. All this suggests that the profession will develop and center on qualities relating to Instruction with a capital"I." Two-year college instructors in the humanities as well as in other fields would do well to further such directions.

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